

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild *NEWS*

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

April 2012

President's Letter

... and Knitting for Money

I have a new co-worker, and when she sees my knitting, she offers to pay me to knit something. "Wow, that's so beautiful! If you make one for me, I will pay you!" I know she means it all nicely, and she probably really would pay something, but the whole thing makes me uncomfortable, and I began to wonder why.

First is the obvious issue that people really don't want to pay what a knitted piece what it is worth, or even likely, what it costs. Non-knitters would be likely shocked (and perhaps horrified) to realize that a basic wool cardigan from basic yarn (even "entry level" yarn) is almost \$50. We all know that the price of materials goes up from there with your credit card limit being the limit. Women used to buying clothes from Target (like me) might experience sticker shock with the news that yarn for a pair of socks costs \$20. I know, I do not really want to spread enlightenment on these issues because I don't want my husband thinking too hard about how much money is invested in my stash.

Next, knitting takes a long time. A sweater likely takes 100 hours to knit; basic socks take me 25 hours. So, 25 hours at \$8.25, plus \$25 for yarn, that is \$231. Can you imagine? Whatever we charge, we are displacing our self-selected work, what we were doing for ourselves or our loved ones. Each knitter would have to decide how she feels about that – for me, I start feeling resentful. The hybrid of this is to knit something for a loved one with that person paying for materials. For instance, I may have planned to knit my brother a hat, but then he asks for a vest and will buy the yarn. My budget stays in line, and since he was on my list anyway, I don't feel resentful.

Finally, if you manage to come to agreement on price, there still is this weird thing that happens: The customer seems to think they also have a life-time knitting service contract – including alterations and repairs. Perhaps because they only know one knitter – you – and don't know where else to turn.

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2011-2012 Meeting Dates

September 14, 2011
October 12, 2011
November 9, 2011
December 14, 2011
January 11, 2012
February 8, 2012
March 14, 2012
April 11, 2012
May 9, 2012

St. Charles Episcopal Church
994 N 5th Ave.
St. Charles, IL

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

FVKG meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, in the Fellowship Hall of the St. Charles Episcopal Church in St. Charles. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.



Program Notes – April 11

Based on how popular her class was in February, the speaker for April's meeting will be our very own guild member, Jenny Bezingue. She will be talking about what polymer clay is and how to work with it. She will show how this versatile medium can work with your knitting. Jenny will be bringing samples of her work to further inspire us.

Jenny's full-time job is as a writer for The Pampered Chef in its marketing department. She does freelance designing and writing for Polyform Products, a local clay manufacturer that has about 85 percent of the U.S. clay market with a number of different brands of clay.



Jenny Bezingue teaches the art of making clay buttons.

Scene from FVKG's March meeting. Photo: Claudia Frost.

~ Lorraine Tompkins

Welcome, New Members!

Kristin Brankin
Miriam Davison
Leanne Hurley
Pat Litzo
Staci Lockman
Linda Marra
Rosa Ruiz

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild Mission Statement

The purpose of the Fox Valley Knitters' Guild is to promote and foster an interest in knitting, to provide the opportunity for study and sharing to broaden one's skills, and to encourage high standards of design and technique in various forms of knitting.

Vendor of the Month

Sunflower Samplings of Crystal Lake will be bringing its unique, stylish yarns and unusual accessories to the guild's April meeting. Be on the lookout for sales and the latest and hottest trends.

Knitting Doctor

Our very talented Sandy Andrews has graciously agreed to help sort out the tangled problems of our knitting at the Help Desk. Please bring your questions and challenges to Sandy before the guild meeting begins or during the scheduled break; she'll deal with the knotty problems with her usual aplomb.

~ Linda Jones

2012 Madison Knitters' Guild Knit-In

Bright and early on Saturday morning, March 10, Christy Becker, Mary Gregory and I piled into Mary's Toyota and hit the road. **Destination:** The Madison Knitters' Guild Knit-In. **Our assignment:** Seek out beautiful new yarns, have lunch, and attend the keynote speaker's presentation. **Mission:** Accomplished!

The three of us chatted, Christy knit furiously in the back seat, and the just-under two hour drive passed in the blink of an eye. Before we knew it, we had arrived at our destination, the Bishop O'Connor Center, a beautiful facility, located high on a hill on the west side of Madison, Wis. Even the parking lot had stunning views! The 550-plus-member Madison Knitters' Guild is lucky enough to meet there each month, in addition to using the facility for its annual Knit-In. All I can say is, thank heavens there were strategically placed signs throughout the lower level where the Knit-In was held, because Mary, Christy and I had forgotten our breadcrumbs, and would have been hard-pressed to find our way back to the car without their help. (Or maybe it was just us, and we are slightly directionally challenged...) In any event, there was no shortage of rooms for the many classes, and the dining facilities and vendor area were wonderfully spacious.



*Bishop O'Connor Center.
Photo: Janet Goier.*

Upon checking in and receiving our name tags, we found a large bowl Miss Babs yarns in 10-yard lengths (just right for those Sock Blankie Squares), and all who attended could choose from a variety of colors and bases – from sock yarn to lace weight to fingering and sport weight. Since the three of us had only decided to make the trek to Madison a few weeks earlier, and many of the classes were already filled at the time we registered, we elected to hear the keynote speaker, have lunch and shop. However, there are a wonderful selection of classes to attend each year at the Knit-In, and this year, some of the featured classes were Two-color Stranded Cap; Socks at Any Gauge (Ann Budd); The History, Methods and Styles of Lace Knitting; All Thumbs, No Holes; The Magic of Needle Felting; Photographing Your Fiber; and Entrelac Essentials.

We were not due to hear the keynote speaker until 1:00 p.m., so upon our arrival around 9:30 a.m., we made a beeline for the yarns and knitting accessories, and were treated to vendors such as our own Sophie's Toes, Black Water Abbey, Briar Rose Fibers and Ogle Design Fiber Arts, as well as vendors like Kelly Black from Pattern Tamers, a very clever design for keeping your place as you follow knitting patterns, be they in a book or on a single page of paper.

Of course, the shopping took up quite a bit of our time, as Mary, Christy and I drooled over beautiful fiber, patterns and books. Soon enough, it was time to make our way to the cafeteria for our yummy lunch, which featured Build Your Own Fajitas or Tacos, served with chips and salsa, as well as other tasty options.

After stuffing ourselves silly, we headed for the auditorium, where we were treated to the keynote speaker, Kate Gilbert, innovative knit designer and editor-in-chief of *Twist Collective*, an online knitting publication designed to showcase designers and knitters'. Kate was joined by Marnie MacLean, knitwear designer and *Twist Collective's* production assistant. The two presented a fashion show of garments recently published in the magazine. I lost count of the number of beautiful sweaters, shawls, mittens, scarves, socks and hats presented, but I can tell you that it was a feast for our eyes, and afterward, we were allowed to try on any of the garments that struck our fancy. If you are not familiar with this lovely online publication, visit



*The Keynote Speaker presentation by Twist Collective.
Photo: Janet Goier.*

www.twistcollective.com to see what I am talking about, and also to sign up to receive the newsletter. The patterns are not free, but they are beautiful!

Although the 2012 Madison Knitters' Guild Knit-In is now behind us, please consider attending in March of 2013. You will probably see a few of your friends from the FVKG there if you do!

~ Janet Goier

Knitting for Charity

There are many charity knitting and crocheting projects active in our Fox Valley community. One group is the Neumann Needlers, which is a charity knitting group at Saint John Neumann Catholic Church in Saint Charles. We meet once a month. In addition to providing charity knitting and crocheting, we also share our experience with expert knitters who help us with learning new skills and help us solve knitting or crocheting problems. Representatives of the community programs we serve often come to the meetings to explain their programs. We continue to work on our projects at home after the meetings, but there are no deadlines, just the opportunity to share our love of knitting and crocheting with each other while serving others at the same time. Some members cannot make the meetings, but they can still have opportunities to provide knitted/crocheted articles for our service projects. Members of the parish often supply leftover yarn from family members who no longer knit.



Saint John Neumann knitting group. Photo: Sharon Coyer.

Our completed items are donated to many service areas in our community. For example, Living Well Cancer Resource Center can use extra-soft caps and shawls for women undergoing chemo treatments. The Life Center asks for baby hats and blankets in neutral colors. Love in Action receives shawls, lap throws, mittens and scarves for children, and scarves for women and men. Nursing homes in the area receive lap throws. Anyone interesting in the art of knitting and crocheting who is a novice, experienced or wannabe knitter is welcome to join us. For more information, contact Saint John Neumann Parish at 630-377-2797.

There are many other charity knitting/crocheting projects that are conducted in our community. First Baptist Church in Geneva has sent infant and child caps with its mission group to Africa for children who are impacted by AIDS. Saint Patrick Catholic Church has a knitting group that knits/crochets prayer shawls for nursing homes and cancer programs at the local hospitals. Wool and Company has sent many helmet liners to servicemen and women. Comfort for Critters provides handmade blankets to comfort animals living in homeless shelters; you can contact info@ComfortForCritters.org if you want to support its program.

Please share with us some of the knitting/crocheting charity projects your church or community organization provides for future newsletters.

~ Sharon Coyer



The latest Living Well CRC Knitting Circle gathering, Tuesday, April 3. The group knits items for charity, as well as knitting for therapy for cancer survivors.

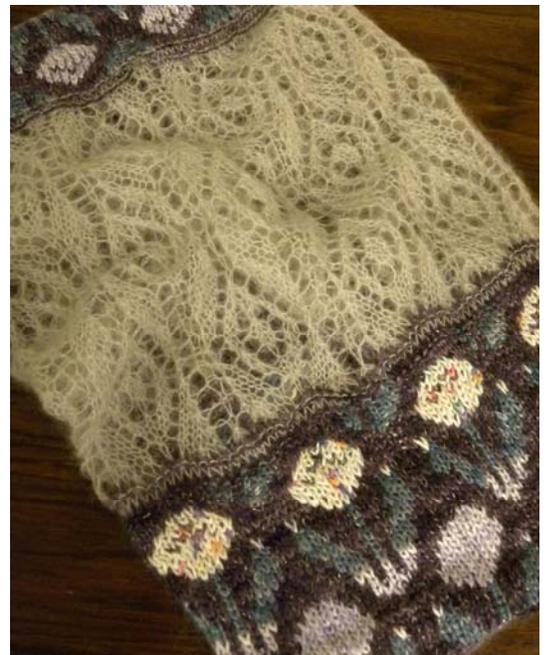
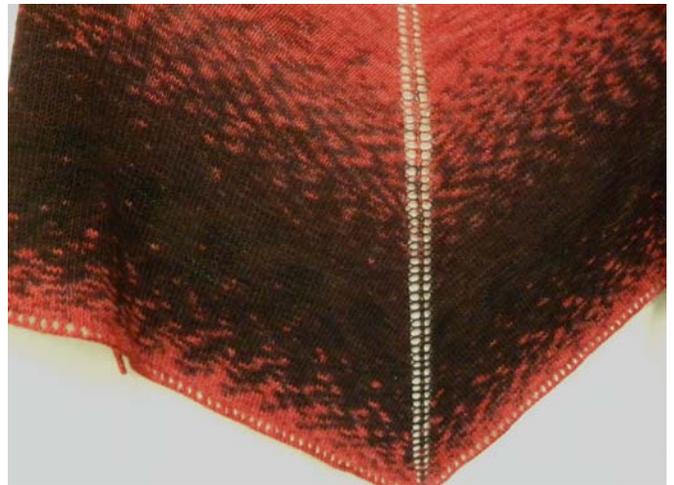
The name of our group is the Living Well Cancer Resource Center (CRC) Knitting Circle. We meet every Tuesday from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. at the Living Well CRC, except for the last two weeks in December. Currently, the Center is located at 1803 W. State in Geneva, but starting the week of May 7, our group will move to the new facility at 442 Williamsburg, also in Geneva. We are knitters of all ages and knitting abilities. You don't have to know how to knit to join our group; you just have to want to learn. We have plenty of yarn and needles on hand, so you don't even have to buy those. We have a few people who know how to crochet, if that's your interest.

A new knitting group has started for those who live farther east. It is the Central DuPage Hospital (CDH) Knitting Circle, and it meets the first and third Fridays of each month, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. The location is the CDH Cancer Center, at 4405 Weaver Parkway in Warrenville.

Our group has formed a team for the Living Well Bridge Walk, held this year on Saturday, May 19. The 5K walk, which begins and ends at the Fabyan Forest Preserve in Geneva, kicks off at 8 a.m. For further information or questions, please feel free to contact Ellen Pinsky at edpinsky@sbcglobal.net or 630-208-9553.

~ Ellen Pinsky, via Barbara Palmer

Show and Tell – March 2012 Meeting



Here we present a small selection of lovely items our guild members presented at the March 2012 meeting. To see other inspiring projects, please visit www.fvkg.com. Photos by Claudia Frost.

May's Guild Meeting:

*Spring-cleaning Stash Sale and
End-of-the-guild-year Party*

It is spring-cleaning time! So start going through your yarn stash and your knitting-related books, magazines and equipment to see if there is anything that you are ready to part with. This is a great opportunity to sell or to give away those things that are taking up space and that you know you will never use. Remember, one knitter's trash is definitely another knitter's treasure.

We'll have several sale tables set up, so there will be plenty of room for everyone's treasures. Please remember to put your yarn into zip-lock bags with the price for each bag.

~ Lorraine Tompkins

Guild Meeting Agenda

- 6:00 p.m. Set up
- 6:30 p.m. Gather to knit
- 7:00 p.m. Meeting begins:
 - Introduce new members/guests
 - Announcements/reports
 - Show and Tell
 - Door prizes
- 7:30 p.m. Break
- 7:45 p.m. Program
- 9:00 p.m. Lights out

2011-2012 FVKG Board Members

President: Kathy Schooley
VP and Website: Lorraine Tompkins
Secretary: Jennifer Duncan
Treasurer: Deanne Karamanian
Hospitality: Tammy Caltagirone; Linda Jones
Membership: Marge Clark
Newsletter Editor: Lisa Schroeder
Gallery Show: Claudia Frost
Library: Barbara Palmer; Marianne Moye

Upcoming Regional Fiber Events

April 14

Stephenson County Fiber Art Fair

Cedarville, Ill.

815-541-0897

www.suzybeggin.com

April 14

A Knitter's Fantasy 2012

Youngstown, Ohio

www.northcoastknitting.org

April 20-21

The Fiber Event 2012 at Greencastle

Greencastle, Ind.

www.thefiberevent.com

April 21-22

Wisconsin Spring Spin-In

Waukesha, Wis.

www.wispinin.org

May 18-20

Kentucky Sheep and Wool Festival

Lexington, Ky.

www.kentuckysheepandfiber.com

May 19

Michigan Fiber Fiesta

Greenville, Mich.

<http://mifiberfiesta.yolasite.com/>

May 26-27

Great Lakes Fiber Show

Wooster Ohio

330-264-9665

www.greatlakesfibershow.com

(President's Letter – Continued from page 1)

I know there are other more favorable ways to look at this. One being, if I am knitting all the time anyway, does it really matter who it is for? This works well for knitters who feel that the product has its own destiny after it leaves their needles. Or, you can knit smaller things to sell in which the yarn and time cost can be more closely matched to what the market is willing to pay, like, say, a \$15 baby hat. Finally, you can go the other way completely and knit one-of-a-kind wearable art for well-paying clientele.

I think that after I finish repairing the leg warmers I knit for my aunt's friend, I will think very seriously, indeed, about accepting another knitting job.

~ Kathy Schooley

Special Yarn Shops

These shops are special because they offer discounts to FVKG members

Esther's Place

201 W. Galena St. (Route 30), Big Rock
630-556-WOOL (9665)
www.esthersplacefibers.com

Fine Line

6N158 Crane Road, St. Charles
630-584-9443
www.finelineca.org

Fishbed Knitting Emporium, Inc.

320 N. River Street, East Dundee
847-844-YARN (9276)

The Fold

3316 Millstream Road, Marengo
815-568-5320

Gene Ann's Shop

117 East Station St., Barrington
847-842-9321
www.geneannsyarns.com

Knitche

5150-B Main Street, Downers Grove
630-852-5648
<http://knitche.com/>

Loopy Yarns

47 West Polk St., Chicago
312-583-9276
www.loopyyarns.com

Needle Things

426 South Third Street, Geneva
630-232-9915

Never Enough Knitting

119-121 North Main, Wheaton
630-221-1007

Stitches in Time

300 W. Washington, Oregon
815-732-4599

*Wool and Company

107A West Main Street, St. Charles
630-444-0480
www.woolandcompany.net

*Wool and Company has switched to a Stash Cash card program instead of a traditional discount.

Discounts!

I just received 10 percent off my purchase at Jo-Ann's because I'm a guild member! I simply showed my membership card and asked if I could get a discount. The clerk had me fill out a form, and I was given a VIP Discount Card, good through 8/31/12; an online discount is also applicable.

Also, on Tuesdays, Michael's gives 10 percent off to those showing an AARP card.

~ Marianne Moye

Editor's note: Michael's also accepts competitors' coupons, including those from Jo-Ann's and Hobby Lobby, which you can combine in one transaction. For example, if you were to use the 40-percent-off-one-item coupons frequently offered by all three of the aforementioned stores to purchase three separate items, you could achieve a large savings.

Finding a Future Location

FVKG membership is growing, and it's great! However, we are reaching capacity at meetings, and would like to entertain the possibility of meeting somewhere that can accommodate our growing numbers more comfortably. FVKG's board is looking for volunteers to create a Task Force to research a different venue for the 2012/2013 FVKG meetings. If you're interested in scouting out a new location for the guild, please join the Task Force. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the April and May meetings.

Our New Tools

New jumbo ball winder and large wooden swift

Your membership in FVKG just got more valuable! The guild has just purchased a swift and ball winder for members' use at meeting events. These will be available at the Help Desk. The large wooden swift holds skeins from 12 inches to 100 inches around. The Strauch jumbo ball winder can neatly wind very large skeins. Stop by the Help Desk to try these for yourself.

~ Barbara Palmer

Knitting is relaxing, and it has no age boundaries and no language barriers.

~ Kathy Zimmerman

Member Spotlight: *Diane Evinger*

When, where, how and why did you become a knitter?

I learned to knit in Bismarck, N.D. My mother and grandmother sewed clothes and embroidered, but did not knit or crochet. The man in my life, who became my husband, revealed he sought a wife who enjoyed knitting, sewing and crochet; his mother and sisters enjoyed needlework.

English or Continental? Circulars or Straights?

English. Circulars.

Tell a little about your family and pets and other hobbies if you would like.

Knitting is not my only hobby. My other hobbies are quilting, sewing, embroidery, crocheting, vegetable gardening and canning.

What is your favorite knitting book? or favorite item you have knit? or both?

The most complex item I have knitted is the Charlotte's Web shawl.

Who would play you in the movie version of your life?

Glenn Close

What is an interesting factoid about you?

When I became a member of the Fox Valley Knitters' Guild, I was not acquainted with any knitters in the guild or in the area. The first year of my membership, Jo Fritter and Mary Stowe encouraged me to attend the knitting retreat in the fall. The experience gave me an opportunity to become personally acquainted with other guild members. I have served five consecutive years on the board – three years as membership and two years as treasurer. My active involvement with the guild has provided me with a circle of knitting friends.

What are you currently knitting?

I am knitting a ladies Henley shirt and a linen stitch scarf.



The Twist Collective

Do you know about this great online magazine that comes out three times each year? The editor is Kate Gilbert who was the keynote speaker at the Madison Knit-In. You probably already know some of Kate Gilbert's designs. The most famous is the Clapotis that many guild members have knit, and that, along with Monkey Socks, is said to have made *Knitty* a success.

In Fall 2008, designer Kate started this new online magazine to showcase extremely well-written and detailed patterns, all finalized by a technical editor for beautiful, successful projects. Because it is an online magazine, the pattern length does not have to be limited. She gives a large part of the cost of the pattern to the designers, and after a period of years, will give the rights to the design back to the designer. You will enjoy browsing and knitting these patterns as much as Mary Gregory, Janet Goier and I enjoyed trying them on in Madison! You will find patterns from many, many designers, including many you already know on Ravelry, such as Amy Herzog, Susanna IC, Fiona Ellis, Laura Chau, Carol Sunday, Connie Chang Chinchio, Veronik Avery and Anne Hansen.

But there is a lot more to the *Twist Collective* than just its wonderful patterns. There are articles and regular columns. In the current issue, Winter 2011, Kay Gardiner and Ann Shayne (*Mason-Dixon Knitting*) in their column, "Ask the Problem Ladies," tackle questions about how to rid projects of a bad sheep barn smell (original blue Dawn), questions about knitting in class, church, etc.; the merits of toe-up and cuff-down socks, and the ethics of copying patterns. Franklin Habit (*It Itches*) has a column, too. This article is titled "The Ten Knitters You Meet in Hell" – certainly not inspired by his teaching at the Madison Knit-In!

The technical editor, Sandi Rosner, also does an article. In this issue, her focus is on increases, with wonderful photos showing you just how each technique will look in your knitting. And Clara Parkes (*Knitters Review*, another online magazine) writes a regular column on swatching. And, when you go to http://twistcollective.com/2011/winter/magazinepage_01.php, you can also access all the past issues to view the previous collections of designs and great articles.

If you sign up, you will receive an email when each issue comes out, with a link right to it. You will also receive newsletters with sneak previews of the next issue – Spring/Summer 2012 will be out any day now! There is also a gallery of FOs from Twist Readers. You can link right to its Ravelry page for more details, and then also check out others who knit the design.

And there is a blog. Although it hasn't made us famous and no one who sees the entry will ever recognize us on the street, do check out the March 16, 2012 entry. There in the center of the photo of the audience you will find Mary, Janet and me, just before we head out to try on all the samples from the current collection. Janet should have sent Kate Gilbert some of her photos from the day!

~ Christy Becker